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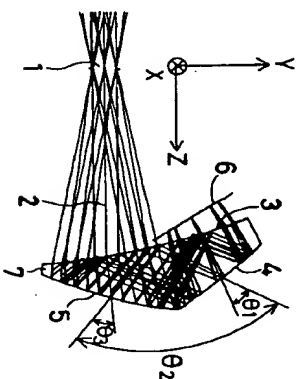
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- (14) 【発明の名称】 画像表示装置
- (17) 【要約】 中間像を作らず、コンバート・程度で収束が良好に補正された頭部又は顔面装飾式映像表示装置。
- 【解決手段】 画像を表示する画像表示素子 6 と、画像表示素子 6 によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系 7 とからなる画像表示装置であり、接眼光学系 7 は 3 つの面 3、4、5 を有し、画像表示素子 6 を射出した光線がこの 3 つの面で 3 回反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、3 回の反射面の中少なくとも 1 面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡からなる。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項 1】 画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、

前記接眼光学系は少なくとも 3 つの面を有し、前記画像表示素子から射出した光線が前記の少なくとも 3 つの面で 3 回反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記の少なくとも 3 回の反射面の中少なくとも 1 面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡であることを特徴とする画像表示装置。

【請求項 2】 画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、

前記接眼光学系は少なくとも 3 つの面を有し、前記画像表示素子から射出した光線が前記の少なくとも 3 つの面で 4 回反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記の少なくとも 4 回の反射面の中少なくとも 1 面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡であることを特徴とする画像表示装置。

【請求項 3】 画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、

前記接眼光学系は少なくとも 3 つの面を有したプリズム体で構成され、前記画像表示素子から射出した光線が前記プリズム体で 3 回以上反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記プリズム体は屈折率が 1 より大きい透明樹脂で構成され、前記画像表示素子側に 1 に従って前記プリズム体の厚さが薄くなるように構成されていることを特徴とする画像表示装置。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】 本発明は、画像表示装置に関し、特に、使用者の頭部もしくは顔面に保持して眼球に映像を投影する頭部又は顔面装飾式画像表示装置に関するものである。

【0002】

【従来の技術】 近年、パーソナルコンピュータ用、あるいは、個人的に大画面の映像を楽しむことを目的として、ヘルメット型、ゴーグル型の頭部又は顔面装飾式の画像表示装置が開発されている。

【0003】 例えば、特開平 2-297516 号においては、図 11 に示すように、映像を表示する 2 次元表示装置 11、反射部準レンズ 12、両側に備わった放物面鏡を設けた平行透明プレート 13 で構成され、2 次元表示装置 11 の映像を表示する光を対物投準レンズ 12 で平行光にした後、平行透明プレート 13 の平行面での第 1 回の透過、第 1 の放物面鏡での反射、平行透明プレート 1

3 内でのいくつかの全反射、第 2 の放物面鏡での反射、平行透明プレート 13 の平行面での第 2 の透過 (8 回反射、2 回透過) により、点 F に中間像を結像し、その中間像を観察者の眼球 14 に投影している。

【0004】 また、米国特許第 4,026,641 号においては、図 12 に示すように、画像表示素子 11 の像を伝送光学素子 15 で湾曲した物体像に変換し、その物体像をホーミング反射面 16 で観察者の眼球 14 に投影するものである。

【0005】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】 しかしながら、図 11 のように、画像表示素子の映像をリレーするタイプの画像表示装置では、接眼光学系の外にリレー光学系が必要になるので、光学系が大型で重量が重く、価値あるいは頭部からの突出量も大きくなり、頭部又は顔面装飾式の画像表示装置としておさわらわしい。

【0006】 また、平行光を中間像として結像する光学系も、中間像を眼球に投影する光学系も、ハワースのものは放物面鏡のみであるので、その光学系で発生する収束が非常に大きい。

【0007】 また、図 12 のように、接眼光学系として凹面鏡のみを使用すると、たとえ凹面鏡が図 12 のようにホーミング面であったとしても、接眼光学系で発生する収束が非常に大きく、画質が落ちる。

【0008】 そこで、接眼光学系で発生する像面湾曲を補正するために、フレイバープレートのような伝送光学素子 15 を使用する必要がある。しかし、伝送光学素子 15、ホーミング面 16 を使用しても、コペ収束等は十分に補正できない。

【0009】 本発明は以上のような従来技術の問題点に鑑みてなされたもので、その目的は、中間像を作らない画像表示装置において、コンバート・程度で収束が良好に補正された頭部又は顔面装飾式画像表示装置を提供することである。

【0010】

【課題を解決するための手段】 上記目的を達成する本発明の第 1 の画像表示装置は、画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、前記接眼光学系は少なくとも 3 つの面を有し、前記画像表示素子から射出した光線が前記の少なくとも 3 つの面で 3 回反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記の少なくとも 3 回の反射面の中少なくとも 1 面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡であることを特徴とするものである。

【0011】 本発明の第 2 の画像表示装置は、画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、前記接眼光学系は少なくとも 3 つの面を有し、前記画像表示素

子を射出した光線が前記の少なくとも3つの面で4回反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記の少なくとも4回の反射面の中少なくとも1面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡であることを特徴とするものである。

【0012】本発明の第3の画像表示装置は、画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、前記接眼光学系は少なくとも3つの面を有したプリズム体で構成され、前記画像表示素子を射出した光線が前記プリズム体で3回以上反射し、観察者眼球に達するように構成され、前記プリズム体は屈折率がより大きい透明媒質で構成され、前記画像表示素子側に行くに従って前記プリズム体の厚さが薄くなるように構成されていることを特徴とするものである。

【0013】以下に、本発明において上記構成をとる理由と作用について説明する。本発明は、接眼光学系をコングラトに配置するために必要な光学系のレイアウトに拘束するものである。すなわち、接眼光学系を導くことは、画像表示装置の厚さを導くために重要である。表示装置を導くことと、重心が観察者顔面中心に近くなるために、同じ重量でも傾斜要素を少なくすることができる。つまり、観察者が顔を動かしたときの追従性が飛躍的に良くなる。

【0014】そのため、本発明では画像表示素子の映像をプリズム光学系を利用して、直接観察者顔面に投影する構成にした。

【0015】次に、接眼光学系を導くことが重要になっている。本発明では、接眼光学系を導く構成のために、接眼光学系の中を光線が往復するように構成して、光路を折り込むことによって接眼光学系を導くことに成功したものである。

【0016】さらに、単に光路を折り込むだけでは広い観察面を確保することができないために、少なくとも1つの反射面を凹面鏡で構成し、その反射面で光線を反射すると共に光線を収斂させ、同時に接眼光学系内を繰り返して反射する構成にすることが重要である。

【0017】まず、第1の画像表示装置について、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面は、同じバワーの屈折面には全く発生収差が小さい。また、色収差に関しては全く発生しない。さらに、バワーを有する反射面が3面以上あると、バワーが分散でき、同じバワーを得る場合にはより少ない収差で投影することが可能となる。さらに、個々の面でのバワーが小さくなると同時に、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面でそれぞれ発生する像面湾曲、球面収差等の発生収差がお互いに打ち消しあい、良好な収差状態を維持することが可能である。

【0018】また、3回以上反射させて光路を折り込むことで、光学系を小型化できることは上述の通りである。

る。また、少なくとも3つある反射面の中、1つの反射面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていると、コマ収差の発生が少なく、周辺まで解像力の高い鮮明な観察像を得ることができ。

【0019】また、3つ以上の面で形成される空間内部を屈折率がより大きい透明媒質で満たすことにより、反射面を裏面鏡で構成することが可能となり、コマ収差と球面収差の発生を抑えることができる。また、接眼光学系の焦点距離が短い場合は、光学系内の光路長をとることが可能となり、接眼光学系の後視焦点位置（フアイヤント）を長くすることが可能となる。

【0020】また、画像表示素子の画像表示面を観察者前方に向けて配置することにより、観察者顔面から前方への変出量を減らすことが可能となる。

【0021】さらに、3つ以上の面は、画像表示素子を射出した光線が通る際に、第1の透過面、第1の反射面、第2の反射面、第3の反射面、第2の透過面の順番に配置すると、3つの反射面が接眼光学系の中央に配置され、透過面で前後を挟むことになり、反射面を全て裏面鏡にすることが可能となり、反射面により発生する収差を少なくすることが可能となる。

【0022】そして、第1の透過面と第2の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0023】また、第2の透過面と第2の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0024】また、第1の透過面と第2の反射面と第2の透過面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0025】また、第2の反射面を観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凸面鏡で構成すると、第1と第3の反射面で発生する像面湾曲等の収差を打ち消すことが可能となり、接眼光学系全体の収差発生量を少なくすることができ。さらに、第1と第3の反射面を観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡にすることによって、3つの反射面がカマラレンズ等でよく知られているリニア（正・負・正）の配置になる。すると、コマ収差、像面湾曲等の収差補正に良い結果を得ることができ。

【0026】第2の反射面で光線が反射する際に、境界角を越える入射角で入射するように配置すると、第2の反射面で反射する光線は全反射を起こし、100%の反射率となる。これによって、観察像の光ロスを抑えることが可能となり、観察像を明るくすることが可能となる。また、反射領域と透過領域を重ねて配置することが可能となり、光学系を小型にすることが可能となる。

【0027】更に詳しくは、光学系を1つの光学素子

で構成する場合に、光学系は「光学素子へ入射する際の透過作用」、「光学素子内での3回の反射作用」、「光学素子から射出する際の透過作用」の作用を併せ持つ。

【0028】本発明の第2の画像表示装置について説明すると、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面は同じバワーの屈折面に出る発生収差が小さい。また、色収差に関しては全く発生しない。さらに、バワーを有する反射面が4面以上あると、バワーが分散でき、同じバワーを得る場合にはより少ない収差で投影することが可能となる。さらに、個々の面でのバワーが小さくなると同時に、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面でそれぞれ発生する像面湾曲、球面収差等の発生収差がお互いに打ち消しあい、良好な収差状態を維持することが可能である。また、4回以上反射させて光路を折り込むことで、光学系を導くことが可能となる。また、少なくとも4回の反射面の中少なくとも1面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡であるとして、コマ収差の発生が少なく、周辺まで解像力の高い鮮明な観察像を得ることができ。

【0029】この場合も、3つ以上の面で形成される空間内部を屈折率がより大きい透明媒質で満たすことにより、反射面を裏面鏡で構成することが可能となり、コマ収差と球面収差の発生を抑えることができる。また、接眼光学系の焦点距離が短い場合は、光学系内の光路長をとることが可能となり、接眼光学系の後視焦点位置（フアイヤント）を長くすることが可能となる。

【0030】また、画像表示素子の画像表示面を観察者眼球方向に向けてと、接眼光学系を射出する光線に対して斜めの位置に傾けて配置することにより、観察者顔面から前方への変出量を減らすことが可能となる。

【0031】さらに、3つ以上の面は、画像表示素子を射出した光線が通る際に、第1の透過面、第1の反射面、第2の反射面、第3の反射面、第4の反射面、第2の透過面の順番に配置すると、4つの反射面が接眼光学系の中央に配置され、透過面で前後を挟むことになり、反射面を全て裏面鏡にすることが可能となり、反射面により発生する収差を少なくすることが可能となる。

【0032】そして、第1の透過面と第2の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0033】また、第2の透過面と第3の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0034】さらに、第1の反射面と第3の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0035】また、第2の透過面と第1の反射面と第3の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成すると、接眼

光学系を製作する上で加工する面形状が少なくなり、製作が簡単になる。

【0036】さらに、第1の反射面と第3の反射面を観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凸面鏡で構成すると、第2の反射面で発生する像面湾曲等の収差を打ち消すことが可能となり、接眼光学系全体の収差発生量を少なくすることが可能となる。さらに、第2の反射面を観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡にすることによって、4つの反射面は負・正・負・正の配置になる。すると、コマ収差、像面湾曲等の収差補正に良い結果を得ることができ。

【0037】また、第1の透過面と第2の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成し、かつ、第2の透過面と第1の反射面と第3の反射面を同一位置の同一形状の面で構成することによって、3つの面で接眼光学系を構成することが可能となり、製作が簡単になる。

【0038】また、接眼光学系の第2の反射面で光線が反射する際に、光線が境界角を越えた入射角で入射するように配置すると、第2の反射面で反射する光線は全反射を起こし、100%の反射率となる。これによって、観察像の光ロスを抑えることが可能となり、観察像を明るくすることが可能となる。また、反射領域と透過領域を重ねて配置することが可能となり、光学系を小型にすることが可能となる。

【0039】更に詳しくは、光学系を1つの光学素子で構成する場合に、光学系は「光学素子へ入射する際の透過作用」、「光学素子内での4回の反射作用」、「光学素子から射出する際の透過作用」の作用を併せ持つことが可能となり、1つの光学素子で構成することが可能となる。

【0040】また、接眼光学系の第3の反射面で光線が反射する際に、光線が境界角を越えた入射角で入射するように配置すると、第3の反射面は全反射を起こし、上記の第2の反射面と同様の理由により、観察像を明るくすることが可能となると共に、光学系を導く小型にすることが可能となる。

【0041】本発明の第3の画像表示装置について説明すると、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面は同じバワーの屈折面には全く発生収差が小さい。また、色収差に関しては全く発生しない。さらに、バワーを有する反射面が3面以上あると、バワーが分散でき、同じバワーを得る場合にはより少ない収差で投影することが可能となる。

さらに、個々の面でのバワーが小さくなると同時に、凹面鏡、凸面鏡等の反射面でそれぞれ発生する像面湾曲、球面収差等の発生収差がお互いに打ち消しあい、良好な収差状態を維持することが可能である。また、3回以上反射させて光路を折り込むことで、光学系を導くことが可能となる。

【0042】そして、少なくとも3つの面を有するプリズム体を屈折率がより大きい透明媒質で構成することにより、3回の反射面を裏面鏡で構成することが可能と

なる。裏面鏡で構成することのメリットは、前記の通りである。

【0043】さらに、画像表示素子側に行くに従ってプリズマ体の厚さが薄くなることが重要になる。画像表示素子から射出した光線は、格闘光学系のプリズマ体内を繰り返し反射しながら進むが、画像表示素子側に行くに従ってプリズマ体の厚さが薄くなる構成にしないと、光線がプリズマ体の中で往復してしまったり、プリズマ体から光線を取り出すことができなくなってしまう。

【0044】また、プリズマ体の少なくとも3つある面中の1つが観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていると、コア収束の発生が少なく周辺まで解像力の良い鮮明な観察像を得ることができ。

$$30^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。この条件式は、光学系の板方向の大きさを決める条件式であり、下限の 30° を越えると、光学系の第1の反射面と第3の反射面が干渉し、広い観察画角をとることができない。ま

$$35^\circ < \theta_1 < 60^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

$$40^\circ < \theta_1 < 50^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

【0050】更に好ましくは、第2の反射面に入射する

$$30^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。この条件式は、光学系の板方向の大きさを決める条件式であり、下限の 30° を越えると、光学系の第1の反射面と第3の反射面が干渉し、広い観察画角をとることができない。ま

$$35^\circ < \theta_1 < 60^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

$$40^\circ < \theta_1 < 50^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

$$30^\circ < \theta_1 < 40^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが好ましい。この条件を満足することによって、観察画角の広い光学系を構成することができ。

$$5^\circ < \theta_1 < 90^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。この条件式は、画像表示素子が光学系を射出する光線と干渉しないようにする条件である。光学系の板方向の大きさを決める条件式であり、下限の 5° を越えると、光学系の第1の反

$$10^\circ < \theta_1 < 60^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

$$15^\circ < \theta_1 < 50^\circ$$

なる条件を満足することが重要である。

【0057】次に、第1の透過面と第2の反射面、さらに、第2の透過面と第3の反射面の光線が使う領域を共通に利用することによって、光学系を小型に構成することが可能となる。このためには、前記の θ_1 を 42° 以上の角度で反射するように構成することが重要となる。

*【0045】さらに、プリズマ体の少なくとも3つある面中の2つが観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていると、2つの反射面で光線が往復することによって1つの凹面鏡で発生する像面湾曲等の収束をもう1つの観察者の眼球側に凹面を向けた凸面鏡で補正することが可能となり、収束の発生量を少なくすることができ。

【0046】さらに、プリズマ体の少なくとも3つある面の全てが観察者眼球側に凹面を向けて配置されていると、収束は更に補正され、好ましい結果を得ることができ。

【0047】本発明の第1の画像表示装置について、更に好ましくは、第3の反射面に入射する光線と射出する光線がなす角度を θ_2 とすると、

$$\dots (1)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (1)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (2)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (3)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (4)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (5)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (6)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (7)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (8)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (9)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (10)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (11)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (12)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (13)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (14)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (15)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (16)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

$$\dots (17)$$

※、上限 90° を越えると、光学系が板に長くなり、小型化することが難しくなる。

【0059】

$$50^\circ < \theta_1 + \theta_2 < 150^\circ$$

上記条件式の下限の 50° を越えると、第2の反射面での光線の反射角が大きくなり、第2の反射面の反射角 θ_2 を大きくとれず、全反射の条件を満足できなくなり、結果として観察画角を大きくとれなくなったり、光学系が大きくなったりする。また、上限の 150° を越えると、第2の反射面で反射する角度が大きくなりすぎ、第

上記条件式の下限については上記条件式(11)と同じで、特に、偏心して配置された第2の反射面で反射するときに発生するコア収束の発生を少なくするために設定したものである。

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11

上記条件式の下限の 90° を越え、第3の反射面での光線の反射角が小さくなると同時に、第2の反射面の反射角 θ_2 を大きくすると、全反射の条件を満足できなくなり、結果として、観察画角を大きくとれなくなったり、光学系が大きくなったりする。また、上限の 250° を越え、第2の反射面で反射する角度 θ_2 が大きくなり、 $120^\circ < \theta_2 + \theta_1 < 250^\circ$ を上記条件式の下限の 120° については上記条件式(2)と同じで、特に偏心して配置された第2面で反射するときに同時に発生するコア収束の発生を少なくするために設定したものである。

【0074】

【発明の実施の形態】以下に、本発明の画像表示装置の実施例1から8について、図面を参照して説明する。各実施例の構成パラメータは後記するが、以下の説明において、面番号は、観察者の位置1から接眼光学系7へ向う逆進時の面番号として示してある。そして、座標の取り方は、図1に示すように、観察者の虹彩位置1を原点とし、観察者視線2を原点から接眼光学系7に向かう方向を正とするZ軸、観察者視線2に直交し、観察者視線2から見て上下方向の下から上を正とするY軸、観察者視線2に直交し、観察者視線2から見て左右方向の右から左を正とするX軸と定義する。つまり、後記する図1の紙面内をY-Z面とし、紙面と垂直方向の面をX-Z面とする。また、光軸は紙面のY-Z面内で折り曲げられるものとする。

【0075】そして、後記する構成パラメータにおいて、偏心量 γ 、Zと傾き角 θ が記載されている面については、基準面である1面(偏位置1)からのその面の面頂のY軸方向、Z軸方向の偏心量、及び、その面の中心軸のZ軸からの傾き角を意味し、その場合、 θ が正は反時計回りを意味する。なお、面間隔に意味はない。

【0076】また、各面において、非同軸対称な非球面形状は、その面を規定する座標上で、 R_x 、 R_y 、はそれぞれY-Z面(紙面)内の近軸曲率半径、X-Z面内の近軸曲率半径、 K_x 、 K_y 、はそれぞれX-Z面、Y-Z面内の円錐係数、 A_R 、 B_R はそれぞれZ軸に対して回軸対称な4次、6次の非球面係数、 A_P 、 B_P はそれぞれZ軸に対して回軸非対称な4次、6次の非球面係数とすると、非球面式は以下に示す通りである。

$$[0077] Z = \left[\left(X^2/R_x \right) + \left(Y^2/R_y \right) \right] / \left\{ 1 - (1+K_x) \left(X^2/R_x \right) - (1+K_y) \left(Y^2/R_y \right) \right\}$$

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*くなりすぎ、第2の反射面で反射するときの偏心により発生する収束が大きくなりすぎ、補正が困難になる。

【0072】更に好ましくは、以下の条件を満足することにより、より高解像度の接眼光学系を構成することが可能となる。

【0073】

$$\dots (11)$$

$$R_x + A_R \left[(1-A_P) X^2 + (1+B_P) Y^2 \right] + B_R \left[(1-B_P) X^2 + (1+A_P) Y^2 \right]$$

ただし、後記する実施例1～8の構成パラメータにおいて、 B_R 、 B_P は何れもゼロであるので、表記してない。

【0078】なお、面と面の間の媒質の屈折率は d 線の屈折率で表す。長さの単位はmmである。また、後記する構成パラメータにおいて、逆進射は、瞳から1mmにある媒質の物点位置から行っている。

【0079】図1～図8にそれぞれ実施例1～8の半接用画像表示装置の断面図を示す。それぞれの断面図において、図中、1は観察者の位置、2は観察者の視線、3は接眼光学系7の第1面、4は接眼光学系7の第2面、5は接眼光学系7の第3面、6は面表示素子、7は接眼光学系、8は偏心屈折光学素子である。

【0080】本発明の第1の画像表示装置の実施例である実施例1、2における実際の光線経路は、面表示素子6から発した光線束は、接眼光学系7の第1面3で屈折して接眼光学系7に入射し、順次に、第2面4の内部反射、第1面3の内部反射、第3面5の内部反射を経て、第1面3に入射して屈折されて、観察者の瞳の虹彩位置又は瞳球の回度中心を射出瞳1として観察者の瞳球内に投影される。また、本発明の第2の画像表示装置の実施例である実施例3～8における実際の光線経路は、面表示素子6から発した光線束は、接眼光学系7の第2面4で屈折して接眼光学系7に入射し、順次に、第1面3の内部反射、第2面4の内部反射、第1面3に入射して屈折されて、実施例3～7は直接、実施例8は偏心屈折光学素子8を介して、観察者の瞳の虹彩位置又は瞳球の回度中心を射出瞳1として観察者の瞳球内に投影される。

【0081】各実施例の瞳径、画角、面表示面の物点高は次の表に示す通りである。

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(6)

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実施例	瞳径	水平画角	垂直画角	水平物体高	垂直物体高
1	4	30	21	14.22	10.67
2	4	30	21	20.32	15.24
3	4	30	21	14.22	10.67
4	4	30	21	20.32	15.24
5	4	30	21	26.42	19.81
6	4	40	30	20.32	15.24
7	4	40	30	26.42	19.81
8	4	50	35	40.64	30.48

(注) 角度は(°)、径、高さは(mm) 単位である。

【0082】また、各実施例の面形状は、実施例1の第3面5、実施例2の第3面5、実施例8の偏心屈折光学系7の第1面の面が球面からなることを除いて、全ての面がアナモルフィック非球面である。また、実施例1、2においては、第1の透過面と第2の反射面と第2の透過面が共通の第1面3からなり、第1の反射面が第2面4からなり、第3の反射面が第3面5からなる。実施例3～8においては、第1の透過面と第2の反射面が共通の第2面4からなり、第1の反射面と第3の反射面と第2の透過面が共通の第1面3からなり、第4の反射面が第3面5からなる。

【0083】なお、本発明による接眼光学系7は瞳1の後方の遠方にある物点を面表示素子6の表示面近傍に結像する結像光学系として利用することは、言うまでもない。

【0084】以下に、上記実施例1～8の構成パラメータの値を示す。ただし、 $\theta_1 \sim \theta_8$ は、図1、図3に示すように、それぞれ面表示素子6の中心を出て瞳1の中心に到達する主光線が第1～第4の反射面に入射する際の、入射光線と射出光線がなす角度である。

【0085】実施例1

面番号	曲率半径	面間隔	屈折率 (偏心量)	アッペル数 (傾き角)
1	∞ (瞳)			
2	$R_y = -115.541$		1.5113	14.15
	$R_x = -113.745$	Y	41.417	$\theta = 30.231^\circ$
	$K_x = 0$	Z	22.523	
	$K_y = 0$			
3	$A_R = 3.47810 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$A_P = -3.48461 \times 10^{-1}$			
	-13.131		1.5113	14.15
		Y	0.000	$\theta = -16.150^\circ$
		Z	45.349	
4	$R_y = -115.541$		1.5113	14.15
	$R_x = -113.745$	Y	41.417	$\theta = 30.231^\circ$
	$K_x = 0$	Z	22.523	
	$K_y = 0$			
5	$A_R = 3.47810 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$A_P = -3.48461 \times 10^{-1}$			
	$R_y = -41.103$	Y	5.300	$\theta = 35.771^\circ$
	$R_x = -317.492$	Z	52.023	
	$K_x = 0$			
	$K_y = 0$			
	$A_R = 1.04588 \times 10^{-4}$			
	$A_P = 1.03487$			
6	$R_y = -115.541$	Y	41.417	$\theta = 30.231^\circ$
	$R_x = -113.745$	Z	22.523	

15
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 3.47810×10^{-7}
 AP -3.48446×10^{-1}
 (画像表示素子)

Y 15.000 θ 33.402°
 Z 30.000

$\theta_1 = 41.54^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 18.14^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 31.80^\circ$

【0086】実施例2

面番号 曲率半径 間隔

屈折率 (偏心率)
 ツェッ数 (傾き角)

1 ∞ (面)
 2 R_r -110.020
 R_a -92.587
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR -2.23371×10^{-4}
 AP 3.30842×10^{-1}
 -111.743

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°
 Z 0.000 θ -34.410°
 θ 44.15°
 Y 80.689 θ 13.619°
 Z 53.881

4 R_r -110.020
 R_a -92.587
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR -1.23371×10^{-4}
 AP 1.10842×10^{-1}

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°
 Y 3.483 θ -10.888°
 Z 71.075

5 R_r -62.030
 R_a -60.309
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR -1.78457×10^{-7}
 AP -1.03071×10^{-1}

Y 80.689 θ 13.619°
 Z 53.881

6 R_r -110.020
 R_a -92.587
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR -2.23371×10^{-4}
 AP 1.10842×10^{-1}
 (画像表示素子)

Y 30.149 θ 0.000°
 Z 43.037

$\theta_1 = 37.08^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 18.54^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 50.34^\circ$

【0087】実施例3

面番号 曲率半径 間隔

屈折率 (偏心率)
 ツェッ数 (傾き角)

1 ∞ (面)
 2 R_r -115.846

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°

17
 R_a -34.264
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.07382×10^{-4}
 AP 1.61195

Y 21.715 θ 15.241°
 Z 16.180

3 R_r -70.535
 R_a -51.175
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.61018×10^{-4}
 AP 3.75278×10^{-1}

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°
 Z 35.280

4 R_r -115.846
 R_a -34.264
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.07382×10^{-4}
 AP 1.61195

Y 21.715 θ 15.241°
 Z 16.180

5 R_r -66.563
 R_a -31.437
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.11006×10^{-4}
 AP -4.30357×10^{-2}

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°
 Z 30.252

6 R_r -115.846
 R_a -34.264
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.11006×10^{-4}
 AP -4.30357×10^{-2}

Y 21.715 θ 15.241°
 Z 16.180

7 R_r -66.563
 R_a -31.437
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.07382×10^{-4}
 AP 1.61195

Y 28.509 θ 33.146°
 Z 30.252

8 R_r -110.020
 R_a -92.587
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR -1.23371×10^{-4}
 AP -1.03071×10^{-1}
 (画像表示素子)

Y 32.117 θ 47.813°
 Z 30.611

$\theta_1 = 17.38^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 86.12^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 125.34^\circ$
 $\theta_4 = 55.10^\circ$

【0088】実施例4

面番号 曲率半径 間隔

屈折率 (偏心率)
 ツェッ数 (傾き角)

1 ∞ (面)
 2 R_r -75.715
 R_a -43.381
 K_r 0
 K_a 0
 AR 1.09013×10^{-7}

Y 1.5163 θ 44.15°
 Z 30.347

(13)

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13

 $R_x = -47.812$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 70.215$
 $Z = 4.410$

24

 $\theta = 21.449^\circ$
 $AR = 4.71488 \times 10^{-12}$
 $AP = 3.07530 \times 10^1$

5

 $R_y = -91.177$
 $R_x = -34.600$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.753$
 $Z = 45.265$

25

 $\theta = 3.412^\circ$
 $AR = -5.01610 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = -6.18435 \times 10^{-1}$

6

 $R_y = -192.835$
 $R_x = -47.812$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 4.410$

26

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$
 $AR = 4.71488 \times 10^{-12}$
 $AP = 3.07530 \times 10^1$

7

 $R_y = -41.177$
 $R_x = -34.600$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.753$
 $Z = 45.265$

27

 $\theta = 3.412^\circ$
 $AR = -5.01610 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = -6.18435 \times 10^{-1}$
 (画像表示素子)

8

 $\theta_1 = 41.91^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 35.71^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 134.18^\circ$
 $\theta_4 = 51.12^\circ$
 $Y = 44.757$
 $Z = 21.108$

30

 $\theta = 31.233^\circ$

[0091] 実施例7

面号

曲率半径

間隔

屈折率
(偏心率)アツペ数
(傾き角)

1

 ∞ (凹)
 $R_y = -146.876$
 $R_x = -45.773$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 17.866$

2

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$

3

 $AR = 5.01515 \times 10^{-11}$
 $AP = 3.11044 \times 10^1$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 38.056$

30

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$

4

 $AR = 3.64231 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = 2.80461 \times 10^{-1}$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 17.866$

30

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$

5

 $R_y = -146.876$
 $R_x = -45.773$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 37.539$
 $Z = 17.866$

30

 $\theta = 24.517^\circ$
 $AR = 5.01515 \times 10^{-11}$

(14)

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15

 $AP = 3.11044 \times 10^1$
 $R_y = -102.060$
 $R_x = -50.615$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 45.218$

26

 $\theta = 17.919^\circ$
 $AR = -1.07143 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = 3.37633 \times 10^{-1}$

6

 $R_y = -146.876$
 $R_x = -45.773$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 17.866$

27

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$
 $AR = 5.01515 \times 10^{-11}$
 $AP = 3.11044 \times 10^1$

7

 $R_y = -102.060$
 $R_x = -50.615$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 1.753$
 $Z = 45.228$

28

 $\theta = 17.919^\circ$
 $AR = -1.07143 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = 3.37633 \times 10^{-1}$

8

 $\theta_1 = 41.88^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 31.31^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 126.91^\circ$
 $\theta_4 = 51.18^\circ$
 (画像表示素子)

 $Y = 45.305$
 $Z = 31.574$

30

 $\theta = 37.688^\circ$

[0092] 実施例8

面番号

曲率半径

間隔

屈折率
(偏心率)アツペ数
(傾き角)

1

 ∞ (凹)
 $R_y = 70.145$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 30.000$

2

 $\theta = 0.000^\circ$

3

 $R_y = -1030.441$
 $R_x = -127.812$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 91.539$
 $Z = 11.307$

30

 $\theta = 16.316^\circ$

4

 $AR = 1.87145 \times 10^{-11}$
 $AP = 1.61383 \times 10^1$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 13.307$

30

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$

5

 $AR = 1.87145 \times 10^{-11}$
 $AP = 1.61383 \times 10^1$
 $Y = 1.5163$
 $Z = 45.534$

30

 $\theta = 64.15^\circ$

6

 $R_y = -357.534$
 $R_x = -143.311$
 $K_y = 0$
 $K_x = 0$
 $Y = 6.304$
 $Z = 45.534$

30

 $\theta = -32.135^\circ$
 $AR = 3.60318 \times 10^{-7}$
 $AP = -3.20871 \times 10^{-2}$

面が同一位置の同一形状の面で構成されていることを特徴とする上記(14)記載の画像表示装置。

【0114】(116) 前記接眼光学系を構成する前記の少なくとも3つの面の中、第1の反射面と第3の反射面が同一位置の同一形状の面で構成されていることを特徴とする上記(115)記載の画像表示装置。

【0115】(117) 前記接眼光学系を構成する前記の少なくとも3つの面の中、第2の透過面と第1の反射面と第3の反射面が同一位置の同一形状の面で構成され、かつ、観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡で構成されていることを特徴とする上記(116)記載の画像表示装置。

【0116】(118) 前記接眼光学系を構成する前記の少なくとも3つの面の中、第1の透過面と第2の反射面が同一位置の同一形状の面で構成され、かつ、第2の透過面と第1の反射面と第3の反射面が同一位置の同一形状の面で構成されていることを特徴とする上記(117)記載の画像表示装置。

【0117】(119) 画像表示素子を射出した光線が通る際に散えた前記接眼光学系の第2の反射面で光線が反射する際に境界角を越える入射角により全反射をしていることを特徴とする上記(110)から(118)の何れか1項記載の画像表示装置。

【0118】(120) 画像表示素子を射出した光線が通る際に散えた前記接眼光学系の第3の反射面で光線が反射する際に境界角を越える入射角により全反射をしていることを特徴とする上記(110)から(119)の何れか1項記載の画像表示装置。

【0119】(121) 画像を表示する画像表示素子と、前記画像表示素子によって形成された画像を光路中で結像することなく観察者眼球に導く接眼光学系とからなる画像表示装置において、前記接眼光学系は少なくとも3つの面を有したプリズム体で構成され、前記画像表示素子を射出した光線が前記プリズム体で3回以上反射し、観察者眼球に導るように構成され、前記プリズム体は屈折率が1より大きい透明媒質で構成され、前記画像表示素子側に行くに従って前記プリズム体の厚さが薄くなるように構成されていることを特徴とする画像表示装置。

【0120】(122) 前記プリズム体の前記の少なくとも3つの面の中少なくとも1面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていることを特徴とする上記(121)記載の画像表示装置。

【0121】(123) 前記プリズム体の前記の少なくとも3つの面の中少なくとも2面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていることを特徴とする上記(122)記載の画像表示装置。

【0122】(124) 前記プリズム体の前記の少なくとも3つの面の中少なくとも3面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けていることを特徴とする上記(122)記載の画像

表示装置。

【0123】

【発明の効果】以上の説明から明らかなように、本発明の画像表示装置においては、接眼光学系が少なくとも3つの面を有し、画像表示素子を射出した光線がこの少なくとも3つの面で3回ないし4回反射し、観察者眼球に導るように構成され、その3回ないし4回の反射面の少なくとも1面が観察者眼球側に凹面を向けた凹面鏡で構成されているので、中面像を作らずにコンフリット・重畳で収差が良好に補正された頭部又は顔面複写式映像表示装置を得ることができ。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例1の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図2】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例2の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図3】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例3の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図4】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例4の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図5】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例5の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図6】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例6の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図7】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例7の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図8】本発明の接眼光学系を用いた実施例8の映像表示装置の断面図である。

【図9】本発明による接眼光学系を用いたポータブル型の映像表示装置の1例の全体の構成を示す図である。

【図10】図9の一方の光学系を示す断面図である。

【図11】従来の頭部複写式映像表示装置の1例の構成を示すための図である。

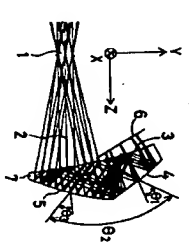
【図12】従来の別の頭部複写式映像表示装置の構成を示すための図である。

【符号の説明】

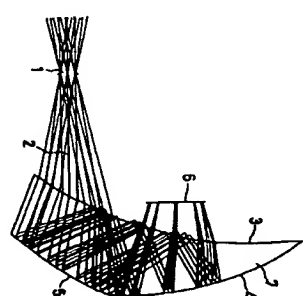
- 1...観察者頭位置
- 2...観察者視線
- 3...接眼光学系の第1面
- 4...接眼光学系の第2面
- 5...接眼光学系の第3面
- 6...映像表示素子
- 7...接眼光学系
- 8...偏心屈折光学素子
- 9...表示装置本体
- 51...側頭フレーム
- 52...側頭フレーム
- 53...板バネ
- 54...リニアレーム
- 55...頭頂バネ

56...スピーカ
57...映像音声伝達コネク

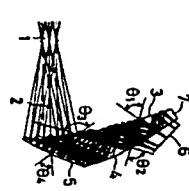
【図1】



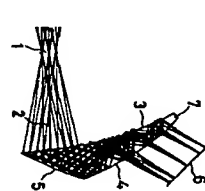
【図2】



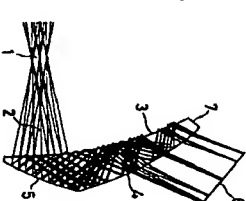
【図3】



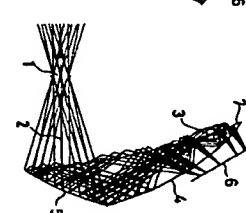
【図4】



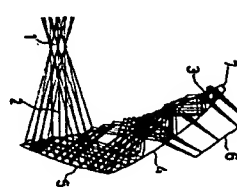
【図5】



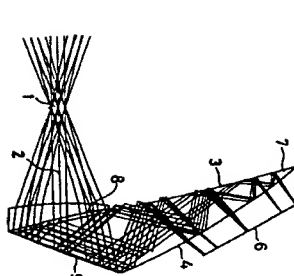
【図6】



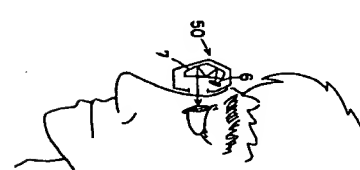
【図7】



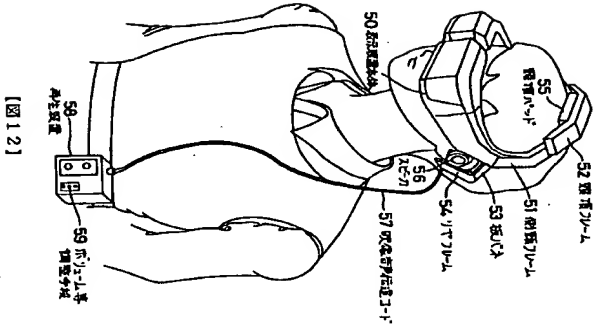
【図8】



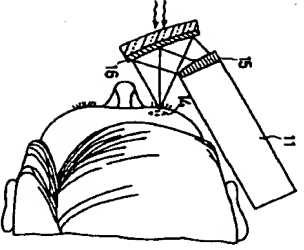
【図10】



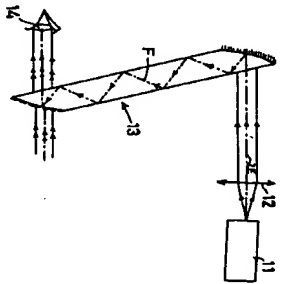
【図9】



【図12】



【図11】



**A Translation of Substantially the Whole of
Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. H9-197336
(Laid-Open on July 31, 1997)**

5 **[Title of the Invention]**

Image Display Apparatus

[Abstract]

10 [Object] The invention relates to a face- or head-mounted image display apparatus which forms no intermediate image and which is reduced in terms of size and weight with well-corrected aberrations.

15 [Features] An image display apparatus is composed of an image display device 6 that displays images, and an eyepiece optical system 7 that leads the images formed by the image display device 6 to an eyeball of an observer without achieving image formation in an optical path. The eyepiece optical system 7 has three surfaces 3, 4, and 5, and a light beam exited from the image display device 6 is reflected on the three surfaces three times, and then reaches the observer's eyeball. Here, among the surfaces perform three times of reflection, at least one is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

20 **[Claims]**

[Claim 1]

An image display apparatus comprising:

an image display device for displaying an image; and

25 an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path,

wherein the eyepiece optical system has at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from the image display device is reflected three times on the at least three surfaces and then reaches the observer's eyeball, and among the surfaces perform three times of reflection, at least one is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

30 [Claim 2]

An image display apparatus comprising:

an image display device for displaying an image; and

an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path,

wherein the eyepiece optical system has at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from the image display device is reflected four times on the at least
5 three surfaces and then reaches the observer's eyeball, and among the surfaces perform four times of reflection, at least one is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[Claim 3]

An image display apparatus comprising:

an image display device for displaying an image; and

10 an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path,

wherein the eyepiece optical system is composed of a prismatic body having at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from the image display device is reflected three times or more on the prismatic body and then reaches the observer's eyeball,
15 and the prismatic body is composed of a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1 and is so formed that its thickness becomes thinner as it approaches to the image display device.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

20 [0001]

[Field of the Invention]

The present invention relates to an image display apparatus and more particularly, to a head- or face-mounted image display apparatus that is retained on the observer's head or face while projecting an image into the observer's eyeball.

25 [0002]

[Prior Art]

In recent years, helmet or goggle type head- or face-mounted image display apparatuses have been developed for virtual reality purposes or with a view to allow individuals to enjoy wide-screen viewing.

30 [0003]

For instance, Japanese Laid-Open Patent No. H2-297516 discloses an optical system,

as shown in Fig. 11, having a two-dimensional display device 11 for displaying an image, an objective collimeter lens 12, and a parallel transparent plate 13 provided with off-axial paraboloid mirrors at its ends. Here, light beams displaying an image on the two-dimensional display device 11 are collimated by the objective collimeter lens 12, and then are
5 subject to first transmission through a parallel face of the parallel transparent plate 13, reflection on a first paraboloid mirror, some total reflections within the parallel transparent plate 13, reflection on a second paraboloid mirror, and second transmission through the parallel face of the parallel transparent plate 13 (8 times of reflection and 2 times of transmission), whereby an intermediate image is formed on a point F for projecting it into an
10 observer's eyeball 14.

[0004]

United States Patent No. 4,026,641 discloses an optical system in which, as shown in Fig. 12, an image displayed on an image display device 11 is converted by a transfer optical element 15 into a curved object image which is projected by a toric surface 16 into an
15 observer's eyeball 14.

[0005]

[Problems to be Solved by the Invention]

However, as shown in Fig. 11, an image display apparatus in which an image is relayed needs not only an eyepiece optical system but also a relay optical system, and this
20 results in an increase in the size and weight of the optical system as well as an increase in the amount of protrusion of the optical system from an observer's head or face. Therefore, it is not fit for a head- or face-mounted image display apparatus.

[0006]

In both of the optical systems one for making the collimated light beams focus as an
25 intermediate image and the other for projecting the intermediate image into an observer's eyeball, only the paraboloid mirrors have optical power, and thus considerable amount of aberrations occur in the optical systems.

[0007]

If the eyepiece optical system is composed of only a concave mirror as shown in Fig.
30 12, even though the concave mirror is defined by a toric surface as shown in Fig. 12, it causes considerable amount of aberrations in the eyepiece optical system and this degrades the

quality of images.

[0008]

To correct curvature of field occurring in the eyepiece optical system, it is necessary to use a transfer optical element 15 such as a fiber plate. However, even the transfer optical
5 element 15 and the toric surface 16 are used, it is impossible to make adequate correction for coma aberration or the like.

[0009]

In view of such problems associated with the prior art as mentioned above, an object
of the present invention is to provide an image display apparatus designed to form no
10 intermediate image, and, among such apparatuses, particularly to provide a face- or head-mounted image display apparatus which is reduced in terms of size and weight with well-corrected aberrations.

[Means for Solving the Problem]

15 [0010]

To achieve the above object, according to one aspect of the present invention, a first image display apparatus of the invention comprising: an image display device for displaying an image; and an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path, wherein
20 the eyepiece optical system has at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from the image display device is reflected three times on the at least three surfaces and then reaches the observer's eyeball, and among the surfaces perform three times of reflection, at least one is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0011]

25 According to another aspect of the present invention, a second image display apparatus of the invention comprising: an image display device for displaying an image; and an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path, wherein the eyepiece optical system has at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from
30 the image display device is reflected four times on the at least three surfaces and then reaches the observer's eyeball, and among the surfaces perform four times of reflection, at least one is

a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0012]

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a third image display apparatus comprising: an image display device for displaying an image; and an eyepiece
5 optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in an optical path, wherein the eyepiece optical system is composed of a prismatic body having at least three surfaces and is so constructed that a light beam exited from the image display device is reflected three times or more on the prismatic body and then reaches the observer's eyeball, and the prismatic body is composed
10 of a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1 and is so formed that its thickness becomes thinner as it approaches to the image display device.

[0013]

An account will now be given of why the above-mentioned arrangement is used in the present invention and how it works. The present invention relates to an optical system
15 layout needed for locating an eyepiece optical system in a compact manner. In other words, making the eyepiece optical system thin is important for making an image display apparatus thin. By making the display apparatus thin, it is possible to reduce the moment of inertia even at the same weight because the center of gravity comes close to the center of an observer's head. In short, the ability of the display apparatus to follow the movement of the
20 observer's head is improved.

[0014]

Therefore, the present invention is so designed as to project an image of an image display device directly into an observer's eyeball without using a relay optical system.

[0015]

25 Next, it becomes important to make the eyepiece optical system thin. In the present invention, the eyepiece optical system is successfully made thin by allowing light rays to reciprocate therein in order to fold its optical path.

[0016]

It should be noted that it is impossible to achieve a wide-enough angel of view only by
30 folding the optical path. For this reason, it is important that the image display apparatus is so constructed that at least one reflecting surface is defined by a concave mirror, and that a

light beam is reflected and converged by the concave mirror while being repeatedly reflected in the eyepiece optical system.

[0017]

In the first image display apparatus according to the present invention, reflecting
5 surfaces that are formed as concave mirrors, convex mirrors, or the like generate smaller amount of aberrations compared with other types of refractive surfaces having the same power, and that generate no chromatic aberration at all. If there are three or more reflecting surfaces that have power, the power is shared and projection can be achieved with reduced aberrations when given the same amount of power. Furthermore, the amount of power
10 needed on each surface is decreased, and, at the same time, it becomes possible to keep aberrations at a desirable level because field curvature, spherical aberrations, or the like generated on the reflecting surfaces of those concave and convex mirrors can be offset with one another.

[0018]

15 As mentioned previously, it is possible to make the optical system compact by making light beams reflect three times or more and folding its optical path. In addition, if one of the at least three reflecting surfaces thereof is concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to offer a clear observed image that suffers from little coma aberration and that exhibits high resolution even in the periphery thereof.

20 [0019]

If the space formed by the three or more surfaces is filled with a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1, the reflecting surfaces can be formed of back-surface mirrors, and thus prevent coma and spherical aberrations. In addition, if the focal length of the eyepiece optical system is short, it is possible to secure enough optical path
25 length in the entire optical system, and this facilitates securing a enough length in rear side of focal point (eyepoint).

[0020]

It is also possible to reduce the amount of extension of the optical system from the observer's face by arranging an image display surface of the image display device such a way
30 that it faces the forward direction from the observer.

[0021]

In addition, if the three or more surfaces are arranged in order of a first transmitting surface, a first reflecting surface, a second reflecting surface, a third reflecting surface, and a second transmitting surface along the direction in which the light beam emitted from the image display device travels, the three reflecting surfaces are disposed in the middle of the eyepiece optical system with being sandwiched by the transmitting surfaces, and this enables all the reflecting surfaces to be formed as back-surface mirrors. Thus, the amount of aberrations occurring on the reflecting surfaces can be reduced.

[0022]

If the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0023]

In addition, if the second transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0024]

Furthermore, if the first transmitting surface, the second reflecting surface, and the second transmitting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0025]

If the second reflecting surface is formed as a convex mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to offset the aberrations including curvature of field occurring on the first and third reflecting surfaces, and this helps reduce the amount of aberrations occurring in the entire eyepiece optical system. Furthermore, by forming the first and third reflecting surfaces as concave mirrors concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to arrange the three reflecting surfaces in a triplet distribution pattern (positive/negative/positive) which is widely known in the field of camera lens and the like. This makes it possible to obtain a better result in correcting aberrations such as coma aberrations and curvature of field.

[0026]

If the second reflecting surface is designed such that light beams are incident thereon at an angle exceeding the critical angle, the light beams are then reflected on the second reflecting surface in the form of total reflection so that 100% reflectance can be obtained.

- 5 This in turn enables light loss in an observed image to be reduced and to make the observed image bright. This also enables the reflecting and transmitting regions to be superimposed on each other so that the optical system can be made to be compact.

[0027]

- 10 It is particularly preferable to construct the optical system with a single optical element that can perform the actions as follows: "transmitting action upon incidence in the optical element," "three reflections within the optical element," and "transmitting action upon exiting from the optical element."

[0028]

- 15 In the second image display apparatus according to the present invention, reflecting surfaces formed of concave mirrors, convex mirrors, or the like generate smaller amount of aberrations compared with other types of refractive surfaces having the same amount of power and generate no chromatic aberration at all. If there are four or more reflecting surfaces that have power, the power is shared and projection can be achieved with reduced aberrations when given the same amount of power. Furthermore, the amount of power
20 needed on each surface is decreased, and, at the same time, it becomes possible to keep aberrations at a desirable level because field curvature, spherical aberrations, or the like generated on the reflecting surfaces of those concave and convex mirrors can be offset with one another. In addition, it is possible to make the optical system thinner by making light beams reflect four times or more and folding its optical path. Moreover, if at least one of the
25 at least four reflecting surfaces is concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to obtain a clear observed image having little coma aberrations which exhibits high resolution even in the periphery thereof.

[0029]

- 30 In this case, also, if the space formed by the three or more surfaces is filled with a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1, the reflecting surfaces can be formed as back-surface mirrors, and this prevents coma and spherical aberrations. In

addition, if the focal length of the eyepiece optical system is short, this makes it possible to secure enough optical path length in the entire optical system, and then it is possible to secure a enough length in rear side of focal point (eyepoint).

[0030]

- 5 It is also possible to reduce the amount of extension of the optical system from the observer's face by arranging an image display surface of the image display device such a way that it faces the forward direction from the observer and be inclined relative to the optical axis exiting from the eyepiece optical system.

[0031]

- 10 In addition, if the three or more surfaces are arranged in order of a first transmitting surface, a first reflecting surface, a second reflecting surface, a third reflecting surface, a fourth reflecting surface, and a second transmitting surface along the direction in which the light beam emitted from the image display device travels, the four reflecting surfaces are disposed in the middle of the eyepiece optical system with being sandwiched by the
15 transmitting surfaces, and this enables all the reflecting surfaces to be formed as back-surface mirrors. Therefore, the amount of aberrations caused by the reflecting surfaces can be reduced.

[0032]

- If the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of
20 surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0033]

- If the second transmitting surface and the third reflecting surface are formed of
25 surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0034]

- If the first reflecting surface and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of
30 the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0035]

If the second transmitting surface, the first reflecting surface, and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to make the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier because the number of surface shapes needed therefor is reduced.

[0036]

If the first and third reflecting surfaces are formed as convex mirrors concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to offset the aberrations including curvature of field occurring on the second reflecting surface, and this helps reduce the amount of aberrations occurring in the entire eyepiece optical system. Furthermore, by forming the second reflecting surface as a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to achieve a negative/positive/negative/positive power layout that is favorable for correcting coma aberration, field curvature, and the like.

[0037]

If the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, and the second transmitting surface, the first reflecting surface, and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, it is then possible to construct the eyepiece optical system by the three surfaces, and this makes the fabrication of the eyepiece optical system easier.

[0038]

If the second reflecting surface is designed such that light beams are incident thereon at an angle exceeding the critical angle, the light beams are then reflected on the second reflecting surface in the form of total reflection so that 100% reflectance can be obtained. This in turn enables light loss in an observed image to be reduced and to make the observed image bright. This also enables the reflecting and transmitting regions to be superimposed on each other so that the optical system can be made to be compact.

[0039]

When the optical system is constructed with a single optical element, it is particularly preferable that the optical system can perform the actions as follows: "transmitting action upon incidence in the optical element," "four reflections within the optical element," and "transmitting action upon exiting from the optical element." This makes it possible to

construct the optical system with a single optical element.

[0040]

If the third reflecting surface is designed such that light beams are incident thereon at an angle exceeding the critical angle, the light beams are then reflected on the third reflecting surface in the form of total reflection so that 100% reflectance can be obtained. For the same reason observed in the second reflecting surface described earlier, this makes it possible to obtain a bright observed image, and helps make the optical system thin and compact.

[0041]

In the third image display apparatus according to the present invention, reflecting surfaces formed of concave mirrors, convex mirrors, or the like generate smaller amount of aberrations compared with other types of refractive surfaces having the same power, and generate no chromatic aberration at all. If there are three or more reflecting surfaces that have power, the power is shared and projection can be achieved with reduced aberrations when given the same amount of power. Moreover, the amount of power needed on each surface is decreased, and, at the same time, it becomes possible to keep aberrations in a desirable level because field curvature, spherical aberrations, or the like generated on the reflecting surfaces of those concave and convex mirrors can be offset with one another. Furthermore, it is possible to make the optical system thinner by making light beams reflect three times or more and folding its optical path.

[0042]

By constructing the prism having at least three surfaces by a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1, the three reflecting surfaces can be formed as back-surface mirrors. The advantage in using the back-surface mirrors is previously described.

[0043]

It is also important that the prismatic body becomes thinner as it approaches the image display device. The light beam exited from the image display device travels in the prismatic body while being repeatedly reflected. If the prismatic body is not so constructed that it becomes thinner as it approaches the image display device, the light beam will go back and forth in the prismatic body, or it becomes impossible to output the light beam from the prismatic body.

[0044]

If one of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body is concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to obtain a clear observed image having little coma aberration which exhibits high resolution even in the periphery thereof.

5 [0045]

If two of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body are concave to the observer's eyeball side, while the light beam traveling repeatedly between the two reflecting surfaces, aberrations including curvature of field occurring on a concave mirror which is one of the two reflecting surfaces concave to the observer's eyeball side is corrected by aberrations occurring
10 on a convex mirror which is the other surface concave to the observer's eyeball side, and thus the amount of aberrations is reduced.

[0046]

If all the surfaces of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body are concave to the observer's eyeball side, it is possible to further correct the aberrations, and this permits to
15 obtain a favorable result.

[0047]

In the first image display apparatus of the invention, assume that θ_3 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the third reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the following condition (1) be fulfilled.

20

$$30^\circ < \theta_3 < 90^\circ \quad (1)$$

Condition (1) defines the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 30° , the first and third reflecting surfaces in the optical system interfere
25 with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angel of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 90° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

[0048]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (2)

be fulfilled.

$$35^{\circ} < \theta_3 < 60^{\circ} \quad (2)$$

5 [0049]

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following condition (3) be fulfilled.

$$40^{\circ} < \theta_3 < 50^{\circ} \quad (3)$$

10

[0050]

Assume that θ_2 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the second reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the eyepiece optical system satisfy the following condition (4).

15

$$30^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 90^{\circ} \quad (4)$$

20

Condition (4) defines the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 30° , the first and third reflecting surfaces in the optical system interfere with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angel of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 90° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

[0051]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (5) be fulfilled.

25

$$35^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 60^{\circ} \quad (5)$$

[0052]

30

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following

condition (6) be fulfilled.

$$40^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 50^{\circ} \quad (6)$$

5 [0053]

In addition, it is preferable that the following condition (7) be fulfilled.

$$30^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 40^{\circ} \quad (7)$$

10 If this condition is fulfilled, it is possible to obtain an optical system having a wide angle of view.

[0054]

Assume that θ_1 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the first reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the
15 following condition (8) be fulfilled.

$$5^{\circ} < \theta_1 < 90^{\circ} \quad (8)$$

Condition (8) defines the condition to be fulfilled to prevent the image display device
20 from interfering with the light beam exiting from the optical system and defines the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 5° , the first and third reflecting surfaces in the optical system interfere with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angle of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 90° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

25 [0055]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (9) be fulfilled.

$$10^{\circ} < \theta_1 < 60^{\circ} \quad (9)$$

30

[0056]

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following condition (10) be fulfilled.

$$15^\circ < \theta_1 < 50^\circ \quad (10)$$

[0057]

By making the first transmitting surface be conjugate with the second reflecting surface, and the region for the light beam exiting from the second transmitting surface be conjugate with that for the second reflecting surface, it is possible to make the construction of the optical system compact. In order to do so, it is important to make the above-mentioned θ_2 wider than 42° .

[0058]

Not only the construction of the second reflecting surface, but also the constructions of the first and third reflecting surfaces are important. When the angle made between the light beam incident on the first reflecting surface and the light beam exiting therefrom is expressed as θ_1 , and the angle made between the light beam incident on the third reflecting surface and the light beam exiting therefrom is expressed as θ_3 , it is important to fulfill the following condition (11).

$$50^\circ < \theta_1 + \theta_3 < 150^\circ \quad (11)$$

[0059]

If it transgresses its lower-limit angle of 50° , the reflecting angel on the second reflecting surface becomes small, and this makes it difficult to secure the wide reflecting angle θ_2 on the second reflecting surface, and therefore it does not fulfill the condition for total reflection. As a result, it becomes impossible to secure a wide angle of view, and the optical system becomes unduly large. If it transgresses its upper-limit angle of 150° , the reflecting angel on the second reflecting surface becomes too wide. This makes the aberrations caused by decentering occurring on the second reflecting surface so large that it is

difficult to correct it.

[0060]

To obtain a higher resolution image, it is more preferable that the following condition be fulfilled.

5
$$70^{\circ} < \theta_1 + \theta_3 < 110^{\circ} \quad (12)$$

The lower limit of condition (12) defines the same as described in the condition (11). Condition (12) defines the condition to be fulfilled, in particular, to reduce coma aberration occurring on the second reflecting surface which is arranged in a decentered state.

10 [0061]

Regarding the second image display apparatus of the invention, assume that θ_2 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the second reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the following condition (13) be fulfilled.

15
$$30^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 120^{\circ} \quad (13)$$

Condition (13) defines the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 30° , the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface in the optical system interfere with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angel of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 120° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

20

[0062]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (14) be fulfilled.

25

$$60^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 120^{\circ} \quad (14)$$

[0063]

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following condition (15) be fulfilled.

30

$$80^{\circ} < \theta_2 < 120^{\circ} \quad (15)$$

The upper limit of condition (15) defines the same as described earlier. The lower-limit angle of 80° defines the condition to be fulfilled to achieve total reflection on the second reflecting surface, and therefore if it transgresses the lower limit thereof, it can not achieve total reflection. This causes the optical system becomes larger or the angle of view becomes smaller.

[0064]

Assume that θ_3 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the third reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the following condition (16) be fulfilled.

$$30^{\circ} < \theta_3 < 150^{\circ} \quad (16)$$

Condition (16) defines the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 30° , the second and fourth reflecting surfaces in the optical system interfere with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angel of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 150° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

[0065]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (17) be fulfilled.

$$40^{\circ} < \theta_3 < 150^{\circ} \quad (17)$$

25

[0066]

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following condition (18) be fulfilled.

$$90^{\circ} < \theta_3 < 150^{\circ} \quad (18)$$

30

[0067]

Assume that θ_4 represents an angle which the light beam incident on the fourth reflecting surface makes with the light beam exiting therefrom, it is preferable that the following condition (19) be fulfilled.

$$20^\circ < \theta_4 < 100^\circ \quad (19)$$

Condition (19) defines the condition to be fulfilled to prevent the image display device from interfering with the light beam exiting from the optical system and to determine the longitudinal size of the optical system. If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 20° , the second transmitting surface and the third reflecting surface in the optical system interfere with each other, so rendering it impossible to obtain a wide angel of view. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 100° , it is difficult to make the optical system compact because its longitudinal size becomes long.

[0068]

Of importance in this invention, it is more preferable that the following condition (20) be fulfilled.

$$20^\circ < \theta_4 < 70^\circ \quad (20)$$

[0069]

Of importance in this invention, it is still further preferable that the following condition (21) be fulfilled.

$$40^\circ < \theta_4 < 60^\circ \quad (21)$$

The upper-limit angle of 60° defines the same as described earlier. The lower-limit angle of 40° defines the condition that permits the third reflecting surface to perform total reflection, and therefore if it transgresses the lower limit thereof, it can not achieve total reflection. This causes the optical system becomes larger or the angle of view becomes

smaller.

[0070]

The constructions of the third and fourth reflecting surfaces are also important. When the angle made between the light beam incident on the third reflecting surface and the light beam exiting therefrom is defined as θ_3 , and the angle made between the light beam incident on the fourth reflecting surface and the light beam exiting therefrom is defined as θ_4 , it is important to fulfill the following condition (22).

$$90^\circ < \theta_3 + \theta_4 < 250^\circ \quad (22)$$

10

[0071]

If it transgresses the lower-limit angle of 90° , the reflecting angel on the third reflecting surface becomes small, and, at the same time, it becomes difficult to secure the wide reflecting angle θ_2 on the second reflecting surface, and therefore it does not fulfill the condition for total reflection. As a result, it becomes impossible to secure a wide angle of view, and the optical system becomes unduly large. If it transgresses the upper-limit angle of 250° , the reflecting angel θ_2 on the second reflecting surface becomes too large. This makes the aberrations caused by decentering occurring on the second reflecting surface so large that it is difficult to correct it.

20

[0072]

To obtain a higher resolution image, it is more preferable that the following condition be fulfilled.

[0073]

$$120^\circ < \theta_3 + \theta_4 < 200^\circ \quad (23)$$

25

The lower-limit angle of 120° defines the same as described in condition (22). This condition is provided especially to reduce coma aberration occurring on the second reflecting surface which is arranged in a decentered state.

30

[Embodiments of the Invention]

[0074]

Examples 1 to 8 employing the image display apparatus of the present invention will be explained with reference to the accompanying drawings. Constitutional parameters of each example will be given later. In the following description, surface numbers are shown as cardinal numbers in backward tracing from an observer's pupil position 1 toward an eyepiece optical system 7. As shown in Fig. 1, a coordinate system is composed of the origin defined by an observer's iris position 1, a Z-axis defined by an observer's visual axis 2 whose direction from the origin toward an eyepiece optical system 7 is taken as being positive, a Y-axis perpendicular to the observer's visual axis 2 whose direction from below to above with respect to an observer's eyeball is taken as being positive, and an X-axis perpendicular to the observer's visual axis 2 whose direction from right to left with respect to the observer's eyeball is taken as being positive. In other words, a Y-Z plane is defined by a plane of Fig. 1 described later while an X-Z plane is defined by a plane perpendicular to the plane of the drawing. An optical axis is here assumed to be turned back within the Y-Z plane on the

[0075]

Of the constitutional parameters to be described later, Y, Z, and θ represent decentering amounts of a vertex of a given surface from the reference surface (pupil position 1) in the Y- and Z-axis directions, and an angle of inclination of a center axis of that given surface relative to the Z-axis, respectively. Note that the positive value of θ means the direction of counterclockwise rotation, and that the surface separation is of no significance.

[0076]

If, on the coordinates defining each surface, R_y and R_x express the paraxial radii of curvature on the Y-Z plane (plane of the drawing) and the X-Z plane, respectively, K_x and K_y express the conical coefficients within the X-Z plane and the Y-Z plane, respectively, AR and BR express the fourth- and sixth-order aspheric coefficients of the aspheric surface which is rotationally symmetric with respect to the Z-axis, respectively, and AP and BP express the fourth- and sixth-order aspheric coefficients of the aspheric surface which is rotationally asymmetric with respect to the Z-axis, respectively, the rotationally asymmetric aspheric shape is given by

[0077]

$$Z = [(X^2 / R_x) + (Y^2 / R_y)] / [1 + \{1 - (1 + K_x) (X^2 / R_x^2) - (1 + K_y) (Y^2 / R_y^2)\}^{1/2}] + AR [(1 - AP) X^2 + (1 + AP) Y^2]^2 + BR [(1 - BP) X^2 + (1 + BP) Y^2]^3$$

Note that, in the following constitutional parameters of Examples 1 to 8, both BR and BP are zero, and therefore they are omitted in the data.

[0078]

It is to be noted that the refractive index of a medium filled between surfaces is given by a refractive index for d-line and that length here is given in units of millimeters. In the constitutional parameters to be described later, back-tracing is carried out from an object point of a virtual image located one-meter way from the pupil.

[0079]

Figs. 1 to 8 are sectional views of Examples 1 to 8 for use with a single-eye image display apparatus. In these drawings, reference numeral 1 stands for an observer's pupil position, reference numeral 2 represents an observer's visual axis, reference numeral 3 represents a first surface of the eyepiece optical system 7, reference numeral 4 represents a second surface of the eyepiece optical system 7, reference numeral 5 represents a third surface of the eyepiece optical system 7, reference numeral 6 represents an image display device, reference numeral 7 represents an eyepiece optical system, and reference numeral 8 represents a decentered refractive optical element.

[0080]

In the actual optical paths in Examples 1 and 2, which correspond to the first image display apparatus embodying the invention, a light ray emitted from the image display device 6 is first incident on the eyepiece optical system 7 upon being refracted on the first surface 3 thereof, then is internally reflected on the second surface 4, the first surface 3, and the third surface 5 in the described order, then is incident on the first surface 3 to be refracted, and finally is projected into an observer's eyeball while the iris position of the observer's pupil or the center of rotation of the observer's eyeball is taken as the exit pupil 1. And in the actual optical paths in Examples 3 to 8, which correspond to the second image display apparatus

embodying the invention, a light ray emitted from the image display device 6 is first incident on the eyepiece optical system 7 upon being refracted on the second surface 4 thereof, then is internally reflected on the first surface 3, the second surface 4, the first surface 3, and the third surface 5 in the described order, then is incident on the first surface 3 to be refracted, and, in the case of Examples 3 to 7, directly, in the case of Example 8, through the decentered refractive optical element 8, is finally projected into an observer's eyeball while the iris position of the observer's pupil or the center of rotation of the observer's eyeball is taken as the exit pupil 1.

[0081]

10 The pupil diameters, the angles of view, and the object heights of the image display surface are as follows:

Example	Pupil Diameter	Horizontal Angle of View	Perpendicular Angle of View	Horizontal Object Height	Perpendicular Object Height
1	4	30	21	14.22	10.67
2	4	30	21	20.32	15.24
3	4	30	21	14.22	10.67
4	4	30	21	20.32	15.24
5	4	30	21	26.42	19.81
6	4	30	30	20.32	15.24
7	4	40	30	26.42	19.81
8	4	50	35	40.64	30.48

Note: All angles are given in degrees ($^{\circ}$), and heights and diameters are given in mm.

15 [0082]

In the Examples, all the surfaces are formed as anamorphic aspheric surfaces, except the third surface 5 of Example 1, the third surface 5 of Example 2, and the pupil 1 side surface of the decentered refractive optical element 8 of Example 8, since they are formed as spherical surfaces. In Examples 1 and 2, the first transmitting surface, the second reflecting surface, and the second transmitting surface comprise the common first surface 3, while the first reflecting surface comprises the second surface 4, and the third reflecting surface comprises the third surface 5. In Examples 3 to 8, the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface comprise the common second surface 4, while the first reflecting surface, the third reflecting surface, and the second transmitting surface comprise the common first surface 3, and the fourth reflecting surface comprises the third surface 5.

25

[0083]

It should be noted that the eyepiece optical system 7 of this invention is usable as an image optical system which forms, near the display surface of the image display device 6, an image of an object point that is located at a distant place behind the pupil 1.

[0084]

5 Indicated below are the values of the constitutional parameters in Examples 1 to 8. It is to be noted that θ_1 to θ_4 represent angles which, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3, the principal ray defined by a light ray leaving the center of the image display device 6 and reaching the center of the pupil 1 incident on the first to fourth reflecting surfaces makes with the principal ray exiting therefrom.

10

TABLE 1

Example 1

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -112.542$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -113.745$	Y	41.417 θ	30.239 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	22.523	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 3.47890 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -3.48466 \times 10^{-1}$			
3	-63.139		1.5163	64.15
		Y	0.000 θ	-16.930 °
		Z	45.349	
4	$R_y -112.542$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -113.745$	Y	41.417 θ	30.239 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	22.523	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 3.47890 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -3.48466 \times 10^{-1}$			
5	$R_y -49.103$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -217.692$	Y	5.300 θ	25.771 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	52.023	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 1.04588 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 1.03487$			
6	$R_y -112.542$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -113.745$	Y	41.417 θ	30.239 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	22.523	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 3.47890 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -3.48466 \times 10^{-1}$			
7	(Image display Device)	Y	15.000 θ	33.402 °
		Z	30.000	

$$\theta_1 = 41.54^\circ$$

$$\theta_2 = 98.94^\circ$$

$$\theta_3 = 39.80^\circ$$

TABLE 2

Example 2

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -110.020$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -92.567$	Y	80.689	θ 13.619 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	53.891	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -2.23971 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 9.90842 \times 10^{-1}$			
3	-111.743		1.5163	64.15
		Y	0.000	θ -34.410 °
		Z	66.190	
4	$R_y -110.020$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -92.567$	Y	80.689	θ 13.619 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	53.891	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -2.23971 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 9.90842 \times 10^{-1}$			
5	$R_y -82.030$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -80.309$	Y	3.423	θ -10.836 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	71.075	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -1.78457 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -1.09071 \times 10^{-1}$			
6	$R_y -110.020$	Y	80.689	θ 13.619 °
	$R_x -92.567$	Z	53.891	
	$K_y 0$			
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -2.23971 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 9.90842 \times 10^{-1}$			
7	(Image display Device)	Y	30.149	θ 0.000 °
		Z	43.037	
	$\theta_1 = 27.06^\circ$			
	$\theta_2 = 82.54^\circ$			
	$\theta_3 = 50.54^\circ$			

TABLE 3

Example 3

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation (Decentered Amount)	Refractive Index	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -115.846$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -34.264$	Y	21.715	θ 15.241 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	26.160	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 6.07382 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 1.61995$			
3	$R_y -70.535$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -51.175$	Y	61.973	θ 25.545 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	35.280	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 1.81098 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 3.75278 \times 10^{-1}$			
4	$R_y -115.846$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -34.264$	Y	21.715	θ 15.241 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	26.160	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 6.07382 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 1.61995$			
5	$R_y -66.563$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -31.427$	Y	28.509	θ 33.148 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	30.252	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 1.99006 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP -4.30357 \times 10^{-2}$			
6	$R_y -115.846$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -34.264$	Y	21.715	θ 15.241 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	26.160	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 6.07382 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP 1.61995$			
7	$R_y -66.563$	Y	28.509	θ 33.148 °
	$R_x -31.427$	Z	30.252	
	$K_y 0$			
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 1.99006 \times 10^{-6}$			
	$AP -4.30357 \times 10^{-2}$			
8	(Image display Device)	Y	32.927	θ 47.813 °
		Z	30.891	

$$\theta_1 = 67.35^\circ$$

$$\theta_2 = 88.11^\circ$$

$$\theta_3 = 125.34^\circ$$

$$\theta_4 = 55.10^\circ$$

TABLE 4

Example 4

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -75.725$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -63.381$	Y	33.117	θ 28.056 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	20.347	
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 6.09013×10^{-7}			
	AP 5.83908×10^{-2}			
3	$R_y -74.938$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -72.723$	Y	11.011	θ -15.658 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	39.328	
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 0			
	AP 0			
4	$R_y -75.725$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -63.381$	Y	33.117	θ 28.056 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	20.347	
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 6.09013×10^{-7}			
	AP 5.83908×10^{-2}			
5	$R_y -53.732$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -54.681$	Y	33.679	θ 46.042 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	23.604	
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 1.31601×10^{-6}			
	AP 1.39856×10^{-1}			
6	$R_y -75.725$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -63.381$	Y	33.117	θ 28.056 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	20.347	
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 6.09013×10^{-7}			
	AP 5.83908×10^{-2}			
7	$R_y -53.732$	Y	33.679	θ 46.042 °
	$R_x -54.681$	Z	23.604	
	$K_y 0$			
	$K_x 0$			
	AR 1.31601×10^{-6}			
	AP 1.39856×10^{-1}			
8	(Image display Device)	Y	38.838	θ 45.420 °
		Z	35.664	

$$\theta_1 = 60.64^\circ$$

$$\theta_2 = 82.60^\circ$$

$$\theta_3 = 123.54^\circ$$

$$\theta_4 = 53.42^\circ$$

TABLE 5

Example 5

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	R_y -84.450 R_x -78.327 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 1.51866×10^{-7} AP 2.08279×10^{-1}		1.5163 Y 50.294 Z 13.050	64.15 θ 35.592 °
3	R_y -89.527 R_x -92.037 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 0 AP 0		1.5163 Y 14.063 Z 42.195	64.15 θ -14.420 °
4	R_y -84.450 R_x -78.327 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 1.51866×10^{-7} AP 2.08279×10^{-1}		1.5163 Y 50.294 Z 13.050	64.15 θ 35.592 °
5	R_y -69.967 R_x -68.800 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 2.01881×10^{-7} AP 7.18068×10^{-1}		1.5163 Y 44.548 Z 21.818	64.15 θ 44.736 °
6	R_y -84.450 R_x -78.327 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 1.51866×10^{-7} AP 2.08279×10^{-1}		1.5163 Y 50.294 Z 13.050	64.15 θ 35.592 °
7	R_y -69.967 R_x -68.800 K_y 0 K_x 0 AR 2.01881×10^{-7} AP 7.18068×10^{-1}		Y 44.548 Z 21.818	θ 44.736 °
8	(Image display Device)		Y 51.011 Z 38.237	θ 51.774 °

$\theta_1 = 68.00^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 80.82^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 114.56^\circ$
 $\theta_4 = 49.96^\circ$

TABLE 6

Example 6

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -192.835$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -47.822$	Y	70.225	θ 29.449 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	6.460	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 4.79488 \times 10^{-12}$			
	$AP 3.87530 \times 10^1$			
3	$R_y -107.834$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -71.577$	Y	3.719	θ -24.450 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	38.713	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 9.75087 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP 2.63255 \times 10^{-1}$			
4	$R_y -192.835$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -47.822$	Y	70.225	θ 29.449 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	6.460	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 4.79488 \times 10^{-12}$			
	$AP 3.87530 \times 10^1$			
5	$R_y -91.977$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -36.600$	Y	1.759	θ 9.412 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	45.285	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -5.86690 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -8.18435 \times 10^{-2}$			
6	$R_y -192.835$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -47.822$	Y	70.225	θ 29.449 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	6.460	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 4.79488 \times 10^{-12}$			
	$AP 3.87530 \times 10^1$			
7	$R_y -91.977$		1.759	θ 9.412 °
	$R_x -36.600$	Z	45.285	
	$K_y 0$			
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -5.86690 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP -8.18435 \times 10^{-2}$			
8	(Image display Device)	Y	44.757	θ 32.233 °
		Z	29.608	

$\theta_1 = 49.96^\circ$
 $\theta_2 = 85.76^\circ$
 $\theta_3 = 134.98^\circ$
 $\theta_4 = 58.22^\circ$

TABLE 7

Example 7

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	$R_y -166.876$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -65.773$	Y	37.539	θ 24.527 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	17.866	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 5.02515 \times 10^{-11}$			
	$AP 3.11048 \times 10^1$			
3	$R_y -108.299$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -86.358$	Y	1.725	θ -21.322 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	38.056	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 3.84236 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP 2.80481 \times 10^{-1}$			
4	$R_y -166.876$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -65.773$	Y	37.539	θ 24.527 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	17.866	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 5.02515 \times 10^{-11}$			
	$AP 3.11048 \times 10^1$			
5	$R_y -102.060$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -50.625$	Y	2.753	θ 17.919 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	46.228	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -1.47143 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP 3.37832 \times 10^{-1}$			
6	$R_y -166.876$		1.5163	64.15
	$R_x -65.773$	Y	37.539	θ 24.527 °
	$K_y 0$	Z	17.866	
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR 5.02515 \times 10^{-11}$			
	$AP 3.11048 \times 10^1$			
7	$R_y -102.060$	Y	2.753	θ 17.919 °
	$R_x -50.625$	Z	46.228	
	$K_y 0$			
	$K_x 0$			
	$AR -1.47143 \times 10^{-7}$			
	$AP 3.37832 \times 10^{-1}$			
8	(Image display Device)	Y	45.305	θ 37.688 °
		Z	31.574	
	$\theta_1 = 49.88^\circ$			
	$\theta_2 = 81.32^\circ$			
	$\theta_3 = 126.96^\circ$			
	$\theta_4 = 51.98^\circ$			

TABLE 8

Example o

Surface No.	Radius of Curvature	Surface Separation	Refractive Index (Decentered Amount)	Abbe No. (Inclination)
1	∞ (Pupil)			
2	78.145		1.5163	64.15
		Y	0.000	θ 0.000 °
		Z	30.000	
3	R_y -1030.641	Y	91.539	θ 16.316 °
	R_x -127.812	Z	12.307	
	K_y 0			
	K_x 0			
	AR 1.87145×10^{-11}			
	AP 1.61383×10^1			
4	R_y -1030.641		1.5163	64.15
	R_x -127.812	Y	91.539	θ 16.316 °
	K_y 0	Z	13.307	
	K_x 0			
	AR 1.87145×10^{-11}			
	AP 1.61383×10^1			
5	R_y -357.534		1.5163	64.15
	R_x -243.329	Y	8.904	θ -22.935 °
	K_y 0	Z	49.534	
	K_x 0			
	AR 3.60329×10^{-7}			
	AP -3.29879×10^{-2}			
6	R_y -1030.641		1.5163	64.15
	R_x -127.812	Y	91.539	θ 16.316 °
	K_y 0	Z	13.307	
	K_x 0			
	AR 1.87145×10^{-11}			
	AP 1.61383×10^1			
7	R_y -210.743		1.5163	64.15
	R_x -70.792	Y	15.028	θ 23.859 °
	K_y 0	Z	53.094	
	K_x 0			
	AR -3.29921×10^{-6}			
	AP -3.08457			
8	R_y -1030.641		1.5163	64.15
	R_x -127.812	Y	91.539	θ 16.316 °
	K_y 0	Z	13.307	
	K_x 0			
	AR 1.87145×10^{-11}			
	AP 1.61383×10^1			
9	R_y -210.743	Y	15.028	θ 23.859 °
	R_x -70.792	Z	53.094	
	K_y 0			
	K_x 0			
	AR -3.29921×10^{-6}			
	AP -3.08457			
10	(Image display Device)	Y	53.058	θ 29.746 °
		Z	39.722	

$$\theta_1 = 49.20^\circ$$

$$\theta_2 = 84.88^\circ$$

$$\theta_3 = 122.80^\circ$$

$$\theta_4 = 48.88^\circ$$

[0093]

In the Examples described above, the anamorphic surfaces and spherical surfaces are used; however, it should be understood that use may be made of any desired surfaces inclusive of toric surfaces, rotationally symmetrical aspheric surfaces, spherical surfaces, or free curved surfaces defined by the following equation:

$$z = \sum_{n=0}^K \sum_{m=0}^{K'} C_{nm} x^n y^{n-m}$$

where x, y, and z represent orthogonal coordinates, C_{nm} is an arbitrary coefficient, and k and k' are also arbitrary values, respectively.

[0094]

It should also be understood that use may be made of such holographic surfaces as set forth in Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. H7-104209. For surfaces that cannot be defined in terms of curvature, power, or the like, it is possible to determine their curvature and power by finding the curvature of a certain region obtained by using a differential value of the shape of a surface that comes in contact with an axial light ray propagating on the visual axis and reaching the image display device along that axial light ray.

[0095]

Incidentally, by preparing a combination of an image display device and an eyepiece optical system according to the present invention for each of left and right eyes, and supporting the two combinations apart from each other by the interpupillary distance, that is, the distance between the eyes, it is possible to obtain a portable image display apparatus including a stationary or a head-mounted image display apparatus which enables the observer to observe with both eyes. One exemplary general construction of such a portable image

display apparatus is shown in Fig. 9, and a sectional view of such a combination corresponding to one eye of an observer is illustrated in Fig. 10. Here, the eyepiece optical system of the Example 1 is used. As shown in Fig. 10, a main body 50 of a display apparatus is provided with a pair of left and right eyepiece optical systems 7, and, with
5 corresponding to each eyepiece optical system, an image display device 6 comprising an LCD is located on each image surface. As shown in Fig. 9, the main body 50 is continuously provided at its both ends with temple frames 51 which are connected to each other via a parietal frame 52. In the middle point of each temple frame 51, a rear frame 54 is attached thereto via a leaf spring 53. The rear frames 54 are connected to the rear side of both ears of
10 the observer in such a manner like bows of glasses, while the parietal frame 52 is mounted on the head of the observer, and thereby the main body 50 of the image display apparatus can be well held in front of eyes of the observer. It is here to be noted that a parietal pad 55 formed of an elastic material such as sponge is contained in the inside of the parietal frame 52, and a similar pad is contained in the rear frames 54 as well, so that the observer can comfortably
15 wear this display apparatus on his or her head.

[0096]

The rear frames 54 are provided with a speaker 56 enabling the observer to hear stereophonic sounds while viewing images. To the main body 50 of the image display apparatus having the speaker 56, a playback 58 such as a portable video cassette is connected
20 via an image/sound transmission cord 57, and thereby the observer can hold the playback 58 on any desired position of a belt or the like to enjoy images with sounds. Reference numeral 59 represents a switch, or a controller for volume or the like of the playback 58. Note that the parietal frame 52 has built-in electronic parts for image- and sound-processing circuits.

[0097]

The code 57 may have a jack at a distal end for connecting it with an existing video deck or the like. Furthermore, the cord may be connected with a TV wave reception tuner so that the user may watch television or, alternatively, with a computer to receive computer
5 graphics images or message images therefrom. Furthermore, an antenna may be used in place of such a bothersome cord to receive external signals via electromagnetic waves.

[0098]

The principles, and some examples, of the present invention have been described above; however, it is understood that the present invention is not limited to such examples,
10 and many other modifications may be possible. It is possible to construct the image display apparatus of the present invention as exemplified below.

[0099]

(1) An image display apparatus comprising an image display device for displaying an image, and an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display
15 device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in the optical path. The eyepiece optical system having at least three surfaces is so constructed that a light beam exiting from the image display device is reflected on the at least three surfaces three times and reaches the observer's eyeball. At least one of the surfaces that achieve three times of reflection is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

20 [0100]

(2) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (1), the eyepiece optical system is composed of the at least three surfaces mentioned above, and the space formed by the at least three surfaces is filled with a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater

than 1.

[0101]

(3) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (2), the image display device has its display surface facing forward direction from the observer.

5 [0102]

(4) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (3), the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system are arranged in order of a first transmitting surface, a first reflecting surface, a second reflecting surface, a third reflecting surface, and a second transmitting surface along the direction in which a light beam emitted from the image display
10 device travels.

[0103]

(5) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (4), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

15 [0104]

(6) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (5), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the second transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

[0105]

20 (7) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (6), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the first transmitting surface, the second reflecting surface, and the second transmitting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

[0106]

(8) In one of the image display apparatuses as mentioned in (1) to (7), the second reflecting surface in the eyepiece optical system, counted in the order in which a light beam emitted from the image display device travels, is a convex mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0107]

(9) In one of the image display apparatuses as mentioned in (1) to (8), the second reflecting surface in the eyepiece optical system, counted in the order in which a light beam emitted from the image display device travels, achieves total reflection when a light beam is incident thereon at an angle exceeding the critical angle.

[0108]

(10) An image display apparatus comprising an image display device for displaying an image, and an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in the optical path. The eyepiece optical system having at least three surfaces is so constructed that a light beam exiting from the image display device is reflected on the at least three surfaces four times and reaches the observer's eyeball. At least one of the surfaces achieve four times of reflection is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0109]

(11) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (10), the eyepiece optical system is composed of the at least three surfaces mentioned above, and the space formed by the at least three surfaces is filled with a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1.

[0110]

(12) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (11), the image display device is arranged inclined to an optical axis of the light beam exiting from the eyepiece optical system with its display surface facing the observer's eyeball side.

5 [0111]

(13) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (12), the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system are arranged in order of a first transmitting surface, a first reflecting surface, a second reflecting surface, a third reflecting surface, a fourth reflecting surface, and a second transmitting surface along the direction in which a light beam emitted
10 from the image display device travels.

[0112]

(14) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (13), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

15 [0113]

(15) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (14), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the second transmitting surface and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

[0114]

20 (16) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (15), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the first reflecting surface and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

[0115]

(17) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (16), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the second transmitting surface, the first reflecting surface, and the third reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, which are concave mirrors concave to the observer's eyeball side.

5 [0116]

(18) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (17), within the at least three surfaces forming the eyepiece optical system, the first transmitting surface and the second reflecting surface are formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location, and the second transmitting surface, the first reflecting surface, and the third reflecting surface are
10 formed of surfaces of the same shape at the same location.

[0117]

(19) In one of the image display apparatuses as mentioned in (10) to (18), the second reflecting surface in the eyepiece optical system, counted in the order in which a light beam emitted from the image display device travels, achieves total reflection when a light
15 beam is incident thereon at an incidence angle exceeding the critical angle.

[0118]

(20) In one of the image display apparatuses as mentioned in (10) to (19), the third reflecting surface in the eyepiece optical system, counted in the order in which a light beam emitted from the image display device travels, achieves total reflection when a light beam is
20 incident thereon at an angle of incidence exceeding the critical angle.

[0119]

(21) An image display apparatus comprising an image display device for displaying an image, and an eyepiece optical system for leading the image formed by the image display device to an observer's eyeball without achieving image formation in the optical path. The

eyepiece optical system is composed of a prismatic body having at least three surfaces, and it is so constructed that a light beam exiting from the image display device is reflected on the prismatic body three times and then reaches the observer's eyeball. And the prismatic body is composed of a transparent medium having a refractive index of greater than 1 and is so formed that its thickness becomes thinner as it approaches to the image display device.

[0120]

(22) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (21), at least one of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body is concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0121]

(23) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (22), at least two of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body are concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[0122]

(24) In the image display apparatus as mentioned in (23), at least three of the at least three surfaces of the prismatic body are concave to the observer's eyeball side.

[Advantages of the Invention]

[123]

The image display apparatus according to the present invention includes an eyepiece optical system having at least three surfaces, and is so constructed that a light beam exiting from an image display device is reflected on the at least three surfaces three or four times and then reaches an observer's eyeball. At least one of the surfaces achieve the three or four times of reflection is a concave mirror concave to the observer's eyeball side, and therefore it is possible to obtain a face- or head-mounted image display apparatus which forms no intermediate image and which is reduced in terms of size and weight with well-corrected aberrations.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Fig. 1] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 1 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 2] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 2 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 3] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 3 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

5 [Fig. 4] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 4 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 5] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 5 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 6] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 6
10 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 7] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 7 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 8] A sectional view of an image display apparatus in Example 8 employing the eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

15 [Fig. 9] A diagram illustrating an overall construction of one example of a portable image display apparatus employing an eyepiece optical system embodying the present invention.

[Fig. 10] A sectional view of one side of the eyepiece optical system shown in Fig. 9.

20 [Fig. 11] A diagram illustrating a construction of one example of a conventional head-mounted image display apparatus.

[Fig. 12] A diagram illustrating a construction of another example of a conventional head-mounted image display apparatus.

25 [Reference Numerals]

- 1 Observer's Pupil Position
- 2 Observer's Visual Axis
- 3 First Surface of Eyepiece Optical System
- 4 Second Surface of Eyepiece Optical System
- 30 5 Third Surface of Eyepiece Optical System
- 6 Image Display Device

7	Eyepiece Optical System
8	Decentered Refractive Optical Element
50	Main Body of Image Display Apparatus
51	Temple Frame
5	52 Parietal Frame
53	Leaf Spring
54	Rear Frame
55	Parietal Pad
56	Speaker
10	57 Image Sound Transmission Cord
58	Playback
59	Volume Switcher or Other Controls